



AN AFFECTIONATE  
**LETTER**

ADDRESS'D to the  
Clergy, and all Orders of Men.



(Price Six-Pence.)

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An AFFECTIONATE  
LETTER,  
ADDRESS'D to the  
CLERGY,  
AND  
All ORDERS of MEN;  
But in particular  
To the DEISTS:

Wherein some new Thoughts are offered upon  
the Subject of the

EARTHQUAKES.

The Whole including all that can be said on  
them with Propriety, so as to bring the Sub-  
ject, agreeable to the Wishes of the Publick,  
to a fair Conclusion.

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L O N D O N:

Printed for C. Corbett, in Fleet-Street, 1750.



AN AFFECTIONATE

LETTER

Addressed to the

CLERGY

AND

All Orders of MEN;

By the



To the

Wherein some new Thoughts are offered upon  
the Subject of the

EARTHQUAKES

The Whole including all that can be said on  
them with Prophecy, as to being the Sign  
of, agreeable to the Wishes of the Church,  
to a fair Conclusion.

L O N D O N

Printed for C. Gifford, in Pall-mall, 1750.



*Reverend Sirs and Gentlemen,*

**N**otwithstanding within these few Years, and lately in particular, by the alarming Earthquakes, we have had many awakening Calls to Repentance, and a Reformation of Manners, yet nothing is more true, than that we still continue in a State of Lethargy and Insensibility to all these Admonitions.

This is so visible to all who are the least conversant in Life, that it cannot but move Pity in every compassionate Breast, and make him wish, that some Means could possibly be found to suppress the growing Evil. But while the Tempers and Bent of Men's Minds are so indisposed to all that is serious and worthy of their Attention, I am afraid that we may lament, without being able to remedy our Condition.

But if Men could be once brought to a Belief of the awful Truths of Religion, with that Depth and Reality which the Importance of their Nature demands, I flatter myself that a speedy Reformation would soon be the happy Consequence.

As a Foundation for which, I would affectionately recommend it to you, Reverend Sirs, whose Province it is to enforce the Precepts of our holy Religion, that each of you, in your several Stations, would present to your

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respective Flocks in your own Lives, such lively Examples of Charity, Purity, Moderation, and Self-Denial, towards the Things of this Life, as would not only plainly evince that you yourselves firmly believe the great Truths of that Religion which your Duty obliges you to impress upon the Minds of others; but that likewise by Opening to the World these indisputable Credentials, demonstrate you are no other Sons, nor Successors, than genuine ones of the great Apostles.

Experience, Gentlemen, teaches us, that Men are more govern'd by Example than by Precept. For which Reason, it is incumbent upon all whom Providence has placed in superior Stations of Life, to set before others the most striking Examples of Virtue. But this is in a particular Manner the Province of the Clergy, and with you, Gentlemen, it would carry the most prevailing Influence, and let me add, till such Time as you are burning and shining Lights to Mankind, neither your writing in Defence of Religion, nor your Preaching, nor any other Instructions whatever (tho' all of them necessary, and not without their Share of Merit) will answer the Purpose of bringing about a thorough Reformation.

I do not mean to urge the Necessity of a good Example to you and the Great alone; no, I think it equally incumbent upon all Denominations of Men, because it is precisely the one Thing needful. But this, as 'tis a common,

common, so I am afraid it will still continue to be a neglected Precept, and for this very Reason, because it is common; tho' indeed upon that Account every Thing that is valuable in Life might be despis'd, as being liable to the same Objection.

This Lesson of Instruction, by Example, in all Christian Virtues, is still the more necessary in you at this Time; especially if there is any Truth in that too general Complaint of a secular Spirit having diffused itself thro' many of your Order, beyond what was ever heard of in the Days of our Ancestors.

And as the Times make it necessary to search our Wounds to the Bottom, so I beg Leave to speak a little to another Point, wherein the Cause of Christianity seems to me to be affected. I mean in regard to your literary Controversies. In these Disputes some of your Order have not behaved with that Candour and Moderation which the common Laws of Decency, not to mention Christianity, requires. This unbecoming Behaviour has been too notorious to have escaped any one who has look'd into your Writings of late. And what makes this Deportment still the more unpardonable, is, that this Spirit of Resentment and Asperity, has chiefly prevailed in a Dispute, where there was not the Shadow of a Reason for any Animosities having the least Existence. I mean upon the Subject of the Fall. And that because the whole Nature of that important E-



vent is in great Measure a Matter of Obscurity ; at least to those Writers to whom I allude, who it may be averr'd have not penetrated into it with that just Discernment as to give any great Matter of Satisfaction to a curious Enquirer. If this be true, what Ground is there for Contention, when one Man's Conjectures are as valuable as another's, or rather both alike insignificant ? as might easily be made appear was it consistent with the intended Brevity of this Letter.

For the future, 'tis greatly to be wish'd that all Controversy among you may be regulated by good Manners, if not by brotherly Love and Christian Charity, and that Truth may be the only Point in View. For while each Party loses Pursuit of it, in striving for Victory and Popularity, and Facts as well as History are ransack'd and tortured for those Purposes, it cannot but give every By-Stander an unfavourable Idea of that Religion, when those who are its Champions are actuated by such unchristian Principles !

I shall further beg Leave to mention another Particular which had like to have escaped my Notice, though it will be highly necessary to enlarge a little upon it. It is that unequal Distribution or rather monopolizing of Livings, which has been so long a Matter of Grievance and Complaint to every one, excepting those who have reaped the immediate Benefit of them. This, it is true, is an Evil that cannot be perfectly remedied but by the Interposition of the Legislature.

But

But as there are many Gentlemen of Genius and Worth at this Time greatly distressed in themselves and Families by this unequal Distribution, it would be extremely becoming in you to level all Matters of Complaint on this Head as far as lays in your Power.

What a fine Opportunity, Gentlemen, have those of your Order of displaying their Generosity and Goodness, (not to mention the Decency and Dignity of such a Behaviour) who are possessed of Deaneries at one Place, of Prebendaries at another, and Rectories at a third, &c. and perhaps neither reside, nor officiate at any one of these Places themselves, above once or twice a Year. I say what a fine Opportunity have they (in Imitation of the Tender-heartedness of the Age we live in, which, notwithstanding all its Vices, it so justly stands celebrated for) of contributing to the Relief of their poor distressed Brethren, who are perhaps now lamenting the indiscreet, though well-meant Intentions of their Parents, for having had the Fondness of bringing them up Men of Letters, when the Times are so illiberal, that there is not perhaps a more certain Method can be taken for a Man's getting himself banished into Obscurity, (with the Allowance of a small Pittance) than that of his having acquired such a valuable Stock of Accomplishments, as in better Times would certainly have entitled him to the Patronage of the Great, as well as the Love and Esteem of Mankind.

But

But in Truth in these Dregs of Times, our pleasant *Great*, of all Denominations, manifest much the same Tenderness for Merit and superior Talents, as Night-Birds do for Sunshine, where in both the Splendor it is that scares. No wonder then to see, that even the Bounty which Vanity or Interest may sometimes extort from them, takes a Tincture of the worthless Principles from which it is derived.

Thus by a new Refinement on the old *Gothic* Disesteem for Wit and Learning, our mock-*Mecænases* have found out the Secret of debasing, under the Colour of rewarding Merit; so that a total Neglect (and how little is there wanting towards it?) would be less infamous and illiberal.

In an Address of this Nature, it would be unpardonable in me, did I not, Gentlemen, express my Surprise at our modern fine Sermons. How void are they of that Christian Spirit, which ought always to breathe throughout those Compositions that are deliver'd from the Pulpit to Christian Congregations? Perhaps this Remisness of yours, is intended as a Piece of Complaisance to the vitiated Taste of the Age we live in; however, be that as it will, I am sure most of them contain such a dull unanimating System of Morality, that one would be apt to believe, that some of the Sages of Antiquity had started up among us to be our Teachers, in the Place of those who had  
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learn'd their Doctrines from the instructive Master of *Israel*. But as I have the Pleasure of seeing the true Spirit of Christianity begin to revive again among a few of your Order ; I hope thro' their Means it will widely spread its heavenly Influence, so I shall not enlarge farther on this Head.

Thus, Gentlemen, I have laid before you what I apprehended was highly expedient, and with that open yet decent Freedom which the Nature of Truth ever demands. Happy I should think myself, if this Mite of mine contributed in any Degree to the public Good.

I shall now turn my Pen more immediately to the Service of my worthy Brethren the Laity. In respect to you who have a full Assurance of the Truth of the Christian Religion, it is still necessary to remind you of the Obligations you are under to the religious Observance of it. The great Misfortune is, that most Men generally make it a Matter of Speculation rather than Practice. Hence it is that we see so many pay a strict Regard to the Externals of Religion, who are utterly deficient in the most momentous Parts of their Duty. To strike at the Root of this Evil, it is necessary to insist that nothing is, or can ever be a Part of Religion, but what enters into and proceeds from the Heart. When it so operates on us that all our Words, Thoughts, and Actions are influenced by it, then, and then alone, will the World and ourselves be truly benefited

benefited by it. For when the Soul is thus tinctured with Religion, it will be impossible that we should do otherwise than pay all that reverential Awe and Regard to the Supreme Being, which is due from Creatures to their great Creator, or indeed neglect the Performance of any of those Duties of Life, which we are obliged to observe as Individuals, or as we stand related to Society. But on Supposition that Men in general were in earnest in the Practice of Religion, yet that wish'd-for Perfection of moral Behaviour can never spread its Influence so widely as every good Man wishes, 'till such Time as those Gentlemen who have contributed so abundantly to the corrupting Mankind by their Writings in favour of Infidelity, are made sensible of their Guilt, and desist supporting a Cause so unjustifiable. The remaining Part of this Letter then shall be to prevail on them to drop the dangerous Cause they are engaged in. For which Purpose, it shall not be so immediately my Design to enter into a Refutation of the Principles, by which they support it, as to point out to them their fatal Consequences, together with shewing them the superior Excellency of the Christian Religion, this I apprehend being a Method of Procedure the most decisive.

Now I would beg Leave, Gentlemen, to observe, that you should never destroy one Building 'till you are capable of erecting another in the Room thereof, that is at least equal to it  
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in Goodness and Beauty. But I think none of you ever pretended to this, as indeed it is impossible, since the Christian Religion entirely comprehends and exalts your ideal Scheme of Morality, which you would at the best only substitute in the Room thereof, but without the powerful Sanctions of Rewards and Punishments, which are indispensibly necessary to operate upon the Bulk of Mankind.

But here I cannot help taking Notice, that it is greatly to be suspected, whether ever you would have had so compleat a System of Morality to have presented to the World, as is now existing, had you not been furnish'd with it by those very inspired Writers, whom you make it your Business so much to depreciate.

What favours this Suspicion greatly is, the imperfect Systems which we have had convey'd down to us from the Antients; Men, whom we cannot but modestly suppose were endued with natural Capacities at least equal to us Moderns; yet it is notoriously evident, that they were greatly deficient in many Points of the most interesting Concern. They had neither that just, nor honourable Conception of the supreme Being which the Moderns have. They were likewise utterly at a Loss in accounting for the Introduction of natural and moral Evil into the World. To extricate themselves from this Labyrinth, they main-  
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tained there were two self-existent independent Beings ; the one the Author of Good, and the other of Evil. They were in no less Uncertainty in respect to the Immortality of the Soul ; as well they might, since they had no Conception of its being a Ray of the Divinity, made in the Image of the Holy Trinity.

This Darkness, with which they were surrounded in Respect to Futurity, was evidently the Reason of their absurdly insisting, that a good Man could never be miserable, or a wicked Man happy in this Life. This was a Doctrine that contradicted the common Experience of Mankind : Yet, as they were by their unassisted Reason incapable of taking in the whole Extent of Man's Existence with any Degree of Certainty, there is no Wonder of their running into these self-evident Contradictions.

If we take a calm Survey of their practical Behaviour in Life, we shall observe, it bears an exact Conformity to their intellectual Obscurity ; altho' I am not insensible how highly it has been extolled upon Occasions, to serve particular Ends, rather than the Cause of Truth.

Indeed it must be acknowledged, that there appears a shining Dignity and Grandeur in their Deportment, which Antiquity, by the bye, does not a little contribute to magnify. But notwithstanding all this Parade of Greatness, it cannot escape the judicious Eye, that all is evaporated away in Appearances, when examined

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to the Bottom. Did not a Savageness attend this Greatness of theirs, if it must be celebrated by that Name, in all their Actions? This was not confined to one another in their unwarrantable Animosities, but extended itself to their open and generous Enemies. How did they insult and trample upon those whom they subdued by the Force of Arms? Upon these Occasions the Laws of Humanity were so violated, that the bare Remembrance shocks all who have any Feelings left for the unfortunate Brave.

I have dwelt the longer upon this Point, because of its Importance. Now I would beg Leave to observe, if this is a fair Representation of Men and Facts as they once existed, as I am persuaded it is; who can disown, that the Natures of these brave Men wanted to be softened and subdued by the meek and forgiving Precepts of the Christian Religion, to make their Characters finished and completely amiable?

Now after what has been said, whoever makes the Comparison between any of these Heroes of Antiquity, and a Man that is made great by the Precepts of Christianity, if he does not acknowledge that Perfection of Character is greatly in Favour of the latter, he must be blind to all Manner of Conviction. And this surely is sufficient to convince any Man (who is not rivetted to his own false Notions) of the

inestimable Blessings we reap from the Gospel Dispensation.

And if Men could but once be prevailed on to read over the Scriptures with a Mind open to Conviction, I am perswaded they could not resist the Force of their Doctrines. Indeed they carry with them a stronger Conviction in their own Behalf, than all human Volumes can possibly give them : And he that will not be perswaded of their Divinity from reading them, just as they stand in the Old and New Testaments, I am very much afraid will never be prevailed on to embrace them from any Arguments that human Writers can possibly make Use of in their Behalf. They only want Disciples of well-dispos'd Minds to pour in upon them all their engaging Beauties.

To instance, what Lover of Truth can help acknowledging the Marks of Divinity in our blessed Saviour's Sermons on the Mount ? How adapted are they to the State of Human Nature ? How would Man be lifted up above the low Concerns of this Life, if these divine Precepts were deeply engraven in his Heart ? How great is the Happiness which is promised to those who observe them ? And how admirably are all of them fitted to subdue the Wrath of our fallen Natures, and to raise up in the Place thereof the lambent Flames of Meekness, Humility and Love ?

These



These Discourses of our blessed Saviour I have pointed to in particular, because of their singular Excellency: Not but what there is throughout the whole sacred Writings, Doctrines of such Purity and Perfection, as plainly infer their Heavenly Extraction.

If we take a View of these Writings in regard to their Sublimity as well as Doctrines, they equally demand our utmost Attention. For whoever reads them with any Discernment must needs confess, that there are numberless Passages which are filled with such sublime Conceptions, that no human Compositions could ever approach to their Height of Perfection: They equally conquer the Head, and penetrate the Heart; and are a standing Monument, that it is to *something else*, than to a fineness of Understanding, that their Enemies withstand the Conviction which they in a manner force in upon them.

But this is a Truth which the Advocates for Infidelity want greatly to be reminded of; that it is possible for a Man to possess a very enlightened Understanding, and yet his Heart may be an utter Stranger to Goodness. Now, Gentlemen, you seem to be ignorant, or at least overlook this just Distinction, or else how could you place the Perfection of Man upon the Excellency of his Understanding, when it evidently ought to be given to the Integrity of his Heart?

But

But where is the Wonder that you, Gentlemen, have such a Disgust to the Gospel Dispensation? It urges the Necessity of dethroning our Self-love, Self-sufficiency and Self-esteem; and it is your Province to cherish a boundless Ambition, and high Conceptions of your own Worth and Importance. You would shine in the Characters of great Scholars, Historians, Statesmen and Philosophers; and rest the Summit of your Glory upon these admired Characters, which the Voice of Popularity so loudly speaks in Praise of. But the sacred Penmen, who have penetrated more deeply into the Nature of Man, makes his highest Excellency to consist in the most absolute Renunciation of ourselves, in Acts of Humiliation, Meekness and Resignation to the Divine Will. Where then is the Surprise, that Men whose Minds are bent upon the above towering Enterprizes, should look down with such Pity and Contempt on these lowly Virtues?

But however, as you Gentlemen, are so zealous in propagating your Doctrines, one would naturally believe that the World at least should reap some Benefit by your Labours; if not in Theory, yet in that of Practice: And yet if we will attend to what common Experience informs us in this Particular (which one should think would be perfectly decisive) nothing is more certain, than that the Doctrines  
which

which you spread, have been productive of the most fatal Effects. For in the first Place, the Principles which Men have fixed in their Minds for their religious Conduct in Life, are all shook and unsettled, and Men are led by an easy Transition, from doubting to the Disbelief of all Religion. And the woful Experience of all Ages, is sufficient to convince us of the dreadful Consequences of Mens having no Barriers of Restraint laid upon them, to keep their unruly Passions within due Subjection.

With respect to Youth, whose tender Minds cannot be supposed capable of weighing your empty and fallacious Arguments, it is too notorious that it cannot be otherwise than attended with the most unhappy Consequences.

The usual Gaiety of Temper which is natural to that Time of Life, requires that they should have such Precepts instilled into their youthful Minds, as would keep them within the just Boundaries of Virtue: Whereas by the loose Principles with which your Writings abound, they poison their unexperienced Minds, and they thereby become exposed to all the Rocks and Quicksands of Life; and if not providentially preserved, are too often dashed to Pieces against them, before they can be capable of forming a just Estimate of human Life.

And



And what adds greatly to this Misfortune is this, that your pernicious Principles are not caught up by those who may be esteemed the Lumber and Refuse of the Species; those who are hackney'd in the Ways of the World, or by Youths of incurious and heavy Genius's; but precisely by those of the finest Understandings, and often the honestest Hearts. These are they who are made Victims to your destructive Principles. Youths who would be not only the real Ornaments of human Nature, but would exalt it to the utmost Dignity, when grown up to Manhood.

Whereas by the ruinous Principles infused into their tender Minds by your Writings, they are too often run into every Excess and Extravagance, which follows from Incorrectness of Life, before their Eyes were open to the Gulph that stood before them. They are then, as a Consequence of their Follies, subjected to the Mercy and Dependance of their Relations and Friends; which Experience but too often teaches us, is the very worst sort of Dependance in the World: Or otherwise, left exposed to the Contempt and Insults of a cold and merciless World; who, instead of pitying their Downfal, perhaps secretly rejoice in seeing them degraded beneath themselves; who, if they had not been thus seduced, would have been so much their Superiors in every Thing that is dignifying of human Nature.

You,

You, Gentlemen, are so sensible that this is a true Representation of Facts, and the natural Consequence of your Doctrines, that with respect to your own Children, to whom you cannot but have a tender Regard, you are generally desirous that they should be brought up in Principles quite opposite to your own. Now to me this is more convincing than a thousand Arguments, that you do not yourselves believe that your Doctrines tend to the Happiness of Mankind: For if you did, surely you would train your Children up to copy after your Precepts, and your own Examples in Life.

I cannot help observing here, by the by, that my Lord *Rochester* declared upon his dying Bed, that *Hobbes's* Philosophy had been the Ruin of him, and many other young Gentlemen in his Days; and it would be a less difficult than ungrateful Task to point out young Gentlemen in ours, who have met with the same unhappy Fate by the Writings in Support of Infidelity; which are so nearly a-kin to those of *Hobbes's*.

Upon this important Subject one might reasonably expect, that the Sentiments of the greatest Men that our own Country ever produced, would carry a prevailing Influence, especially with you, who value yourselves so much upon the Fineness of your Understanding.

derstandings. I am certain had you such Men to boast of, as Supporters of your Cause, as the Advocates for Christianity have for theirs, you would make it a Matter of no small Triumph. There is no Occasion to mention the Names of such distinguished Men, every one knows them. However, it cannot be supposed they wanted either Capacity or Inclination to examine Matters to the Bottom without Prejudice or Partiality; and yet upon the strictest Examination, they unanimously reject your deistical Scheme, and declare themselves in Favour of the Religion of their Country, not only by their Writings. but Examples.

Another Argument of no small Weight I would suggest, to shew the Weakness of your Cause is this; that when you are attacked with Sickness, or approach towards the Verge of Life, and Things are presented in the most awful Manner to your Minds; you then begin to be sensible how unable your Doctrines are to sustain you in those important Moments; you then see it indispensibly necessary to fly to a Saviour, to make even your most apparent Virtues have the Appearance of Virtue, before him who is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity.

Tho' I am sensible, to evade the Force of this Argument there are not a few of you, that endeavour to palliate this pusillanimous  
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Behaviour, by attributing this quick Transition to an Imagination disturbed by the Nature of the Disorder with which they may be afflicted. It must be acknowledged, that this may be sometimes, tho' I think rarely the Case. I am afraid it is too often made use of without any Manner of Foundation in Truth, merely as a Pretence to support a defenceless Cause. *Chubb* in particular was so sensible of this, and yet had Infidelity so deeply ingrafted in his Nature, that sometime before he died (as I am informed) he openly declared himself a Proof against all Conviction whatever, by intimating, that if he should happen to change his religious Sentiments in his last Moments, yet he would not have them to be of any Weight in favour of Christianity.

Tho' I am far from having so contemptible Opinion of any Body of Men, as to conceive them capable of acting consciously with a deliberate and steady Intention to debase the Morals, and disturb the Happiness of Society; yet I can easily believe that Men may be actuated by a Spirit of Popularity, to do many Things which they are sensible they ought not to do; and whether this is not the Motive by which you are actuated, I would submit to the Public Determination.

A generous Emulation of excelling, and a Desire of appearing to Advantage in the  
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Eye

Eye of the Public, I am sensible is not only innocent in itself, but is also a strong Incentive to the most amiable Actions; but then let it be observed, that we ought never to be urged on by the Allurement of being distinguish'd, to do Actions which are in themselves prejudicial to the common Interest of Society.

But supposing, for Argument-Sake, that your Scheme would absolutely oblige Men to a strict Observance of the several Duties of Life; this would indeed answer our Intentions here, but must we not extend our Desires to nobler Purposes and Prospects than any Thing this World can afford? Must we not take Futurity into our Account? If this must be done, it may with Truth be impartially pronounced, that Men may practise all the social Duties, and go thro' Life with Dignity and Applause, and yet at the Bottom all may have proceeded from earthly Motives. But it well deserves Observation, that nothing can ever reach Heaven, but what partakes of the Nature of Heaven; so here then the Religion of Natural Reason, which has a natural Tendency to fix our Minds upon the poor Concerns of this Life, fails you, and that in an Affair of the most interesting and important Nature. But the Religion of the Gospel, on the contrary, teaches us in all our Thoughts and Actions to have  
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Heaven perpetually in our View; for however decent and engaging our Conduct may have been in Life, let us have done ever so many Exploits in the Capacity of Statesmen or Philosophers, Moralists or Divines, yet all will be of no Avail, unless it has proceeded from a Spirit derived from Heaven.

But notwithstanding all I have urged in Behalf of the Gospel, I still expect that you will object that it narrows the Way of Salvation; and if it was the one true Religion, it must needs be as extensive as human Nature itself, so that every Individual of the human Species might be made a Partaker of its Benefits. Whereas it is evident you say, that Christ himself did not take human Nature upon him, till some thousands of Years after the Fall, and if so, what Benefit could those reap from him who were born before his Appearance, any more than those who have been born since, but never heard of his Name. This I apprehend to be one of the principal Objections which you have urged against the Christian Religion; and yet this, when examined into, is not worthy of the least Regard, since it has no Existence but in your own Imaginations. For your great Mistake lays in your not fully comprehending the Nature of Christ's Redemption. For no sooner did

*Adam*



*Adam* by his Fall lose that Light and Spirit of Heaven in his Soul, in which his being an Image of the Divinity consisted; but Christ immediately enter'd as a second Creator, or a Seed of Life, into the human Nature again; (this is fully signify'd by the Consolation given to *Adam*, that the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's Head) by which he became the Saviour of *Adam*, and all Mankind; so that you see there is nothing of Narrowness in the Christian Religion which you have objected against it; it takes every human Creature into the Arms of its Mercy, and every Man by cherishing the Growth of this Seed of Life, or the Light and Spirit of Heaven in his Soul, will most assuredly be made a Partaker of Christ's Salvation. But without doing this it will be impossible.

For consider this easy Similitude, before there can be a Possibility for your being an Inhabitant of this World, the Light and Spirit of this World must be incorporated with your Body; so, in like Manner, before you can be an Inhabitant of Heaven, the Light and Spirit of Heaven must be united to your Soul.—You may think it romantic to talk about the Light and Spirit of Heaven; but be assur'd, if there was not a Light and Spirit of Heaven, there could be no Light and Spirit of this World, for this is only an Out-Birth of the other; the one always exists in Eternity,  
being

being the glorious Manifestation of the Triune-God ; and the other is only brought into a temporary State of Existence ; for nothing could ever have any Existence here, but what had its prior Existence in Eternity : No one can reasonably deny this, unless he can make it appear, that Something can be produced out of Nothing ; and tho' this is the vulgar received Opinion, I think it is too absurd to be swallow'd by Men of your Depth of Penetration.

I expect, according to the modern decisive Way of determining what is not understood, you will condemn this Doctrine at once as enthusiastic or chimerical ; but then your Condemnation of it will shew, how utterly unacquainted you are with the Operations of Nature, or rather the God of Nature, and thereby manifest that our Philosophy is at as low an Ebb as our modern Divinity. For God acts with an unvaried Uniformity throughout all his Kingdoms, and nothing can possibly live, or have its Existence in any, without its first having the Light and Spirit of that Kingdom within it in which it dwells. Temporal Beings must have the Light and Spirit of temporary Nature in them, and eternal Beings the Light and Spirit of Eternity.

Here then, my Friends, your Doctrine of Natural Religion or Reason, is tore up by the Roots.



**Roots.** For it is impossible that it can ever raise this Seed of Life, this Light and Spirit of Eternity in your Souls. No! you may as well expect to strike Fire out of a Flint without the Assistance of a Steel, or that the vegetable World can be raised to Life and Beauty without the prolifick Rays of the Sun, as to do this by your Religion of Natural Reason.

This can only be done by the efficacious Power of that Saviour, whose Goodness you have so long resisted. For it is he who is the Life, the Light, and *Spirit* of Eternity, and through him every human Creature must be saved.

And this he is infinitely desirous of doing. For this he came down from Heaven, thereby manifesting to us, that he is the Love, the Sweetness, and compassionate Goodness of the Deity himself, who became Man, so that Man might have Power to become the Sons of God. And if you, who have been so long rebellious to his Goodness, will yet fall down before him, in deep Humility acknowledging your own Vileness and Nothingness, looking up to him in Faith and Love, he will still be your Saviour and dear Redeemer.

It would lead me into too great a Length, was I to enter into an Illustration of all the great Truths of our Religion. However, if you are desirous of seeing what a firm Foundation they are fixed upon, and your own  
Doctrines



Doctrines dashed to Pieces, as well as the above System of Spirituality fully opened to you, I would recommend to you for that Purpose a Book called,

*An Appeal to all that doubt or disbelieve the Truths of the Christian Religion, whether they be*

Deists, Arians, Socinians, or Nominal Christians.

By WILLIAM LAW, M. A.

Printed for Mr. Innys, Pater-noster-Row.

Wherein if you are actuated by a Love of Truth, I am perswaded, you will meet with Reasons sufficient to make you renounce your own Doctrines; tho' I flatter myself, you are already in some Degree convinced how much you are your own, and the Enemies of Mankind in spreading them abroad, at the Risk of your own Salvation.

For your own Sakes, and for the Happiness of Society, let me then, Gentlemen, for the future entreat you, that you would rid yourselves of these pernicious Principles, and be more afraid of harbouring such Enemies in your Bosoms, than you would a Viper: For the Poison of a

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venemous Creature is not so hurtful to your Bodies, as these Doctrines are to your Souls, tho' you are now perhaps insensible of the Injury they do you, because of your being surrounded with Darkness, by wilfully rejecting the glorious Light of the Gospel.

I pray, that he who is the Author of every good and perfect Gift, may illuminate your Minds, and that you may be guided by his Holy Spirit to reverence and embrace the saving Doctrines of Jesus Christ.

When this is accomplished in you, and those who believe already in our holy Religion, act suitable to that Conviction, then shall we see ourselves a prosperous and happy People; and tho' Plagues, Tempests and Earthquakes should then happen, we need not be afraid; nay, even if Nature herself was going to a general Dissolution.

I cannot conclude, without expressing no less my Concern than Surprise, that while I am writing this Letter, the Papers give a melancholy Account, of Numbers of People having meanly deserted their Dwellings, out of an imaginary Fear of another Earthquake; thereby manifesting, not only the utmost Credulity, but likewise a Distrust of the Goodness of that Providence, who pervades the whole Universe, and whose tender Mercies (as well as impartial Justice) are extended to all his Creatures.

But

But what makes this still the more affecting is, to find those of superior Stations of Life, betraying this irreligious Distrust; when their Country, the Advantages of Education, and above all, the Bounty and Goodness of God towards them in particular, mutually concur to demand a Deportment, which implies the greatest Dignity and Fortitude of Mind. I am, with the warmest Wishes for your present and eternal Happiness,

*Reverend Sirs and Gentlemen,*

*Your most affectionate Friend,*

*And humble Servant,*

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F I N I S.



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The first notice this will the more affecting  
is to find those of Superior Station, who  
leave this religious District, when they  
Country, the Advantages of Education, and  
above all, the Bounty and Goodness of God  
towards them in particular, inwardly compel  
to demand a Deportment, which implies the  
greatest Dignity and Fortitude of Mind,  
and, with the warmest Wishes for your  
best and eternal Happiness.

Respectfully,  
Your Obedient Servant,  
John Smith

10 FEB 58

And I am, Sir, Your Obedient Servant,  
John Smith

P. I. N. I. S.

